COMMEMORATOR

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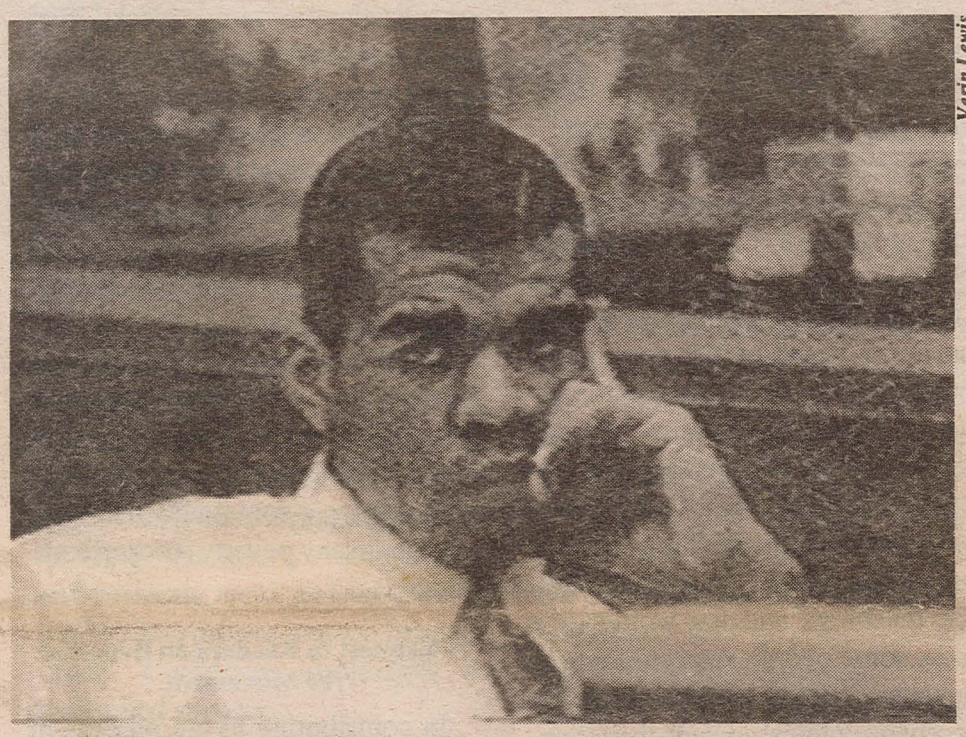
Citizens Decry Manipulation in Denny Verdict

Beating trials seen as efforts to protect status quo, deny recourse for minority and low income



Verin Lewis

Damian Williams, co-defendant in Denny beating case, faces up to a life sentence if convicted of all charges. Officers Koon and Powell, convicted of the King beating, were sentenced to 30 months.

As "fallout" from the Reginald Denny affair continues to hit the airwaves and the press — much in the way information regarding the Rodney King trial furnished the media with its season of sensation — seriously concerned citizens, bearing in mind the media coverage following the King affair, have begun to respond this time around with an opinion other than the "yea" or "nay" reactionary positions toward predetermined issues put forward in the press, and are doing so even without benefit of a legal or socioeconomic analysis.

A hue and cry accompanied the discovery that the beating of King and two others by more than a score of Los Angeles police officers had been videotaped and captured the brutal essence of their actions. But what was forgotten was the manner in which the chase started. The police were in staked out positions in South Central L.A. As usual, they sought vehicles or individuals matching a profile, like having a mag-wheeled car with personalized plates. The racism is an institutionalized racialism. It is contained within an entire modus operandi of police policy.

As well, the existence of two passengers in King's car stood forgotten, one of whom was mysteriously killed without investigation; nor was the case prosecuted upon complaint.

All of this left Mr. King in the role of isolated victim with whom the local population identified. Their demands for justice were thwarted by a motion for a change of venue

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Next issue look for story on state of small businesses

California Governor's Attack on "Illegal Immigrants" a Red Herring

As the conventional media plays to the fears of the increasingly unemployed, laid-off and soon-to-be-laid-off U.S. labor force through sensational stories of "foreigners" "invading" the U.S., California Governor Pete Wilson is now leading the pack in pointing fingers at undocumented workers (or in the media terminology, "illegal immigrants") as the principal cause of the critical economic crisis facing the state today.

Governor Wilson found his popularity poll rating below 17 percent in February as the state budget was over $6 billion in the red. Wilson took the opportunity to write the recently inaugurated President Clinton an open letter which endorsed the view that undocumented immigrants take jobs from natives, depress wages for everyone and fill jails, schools and hospitals while paying no taxes.

Commemorator photo

Immigrants living the "good life" in California; paid as little as one penny for two week's labor after deduction for meals, bunk space and transportation to work sites.

The Governor found a new key to popularity by blaming California's problems of unemployment, poverty and plant closing (many as a result of defense industry reduction) on the traditional scapegoat of immigrants, in a nation built by the foreign-born.

Class, Race and U.S. Immigration

A recent study by La Raza Centro Legal in San Francisco, Calif. revealed the racial, class and national origin biases that have existed in U.S. immigration policy since its beginning.

One of the earliest U.S. immigration laws was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which outlawed Chinese immigration after Chinese labor had built the transcontinental railroad and the levees of California's Central Valley. In the 1920s, quota laws were passed to limit immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe, whose inhabitants were considered inferior. Similar laws restricting the immigration of Asians and Mexicans existed until 1948. Despite the huge number of immigrants from third world countries still waiting to be allowed to bring their families into this country, Congress passed a law in 1990 that allowed in 40,000 new immigrants who had no connection with this country — 16,000 of these came from Ireland.

At the same time, much immigration to this country is a direct result of U.S. foreign policies which make "sending" countries unlivable for millions of people. The U.S. receives a constant flow of immigrants from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Cambodia, Laos, and Iraq, all of which have been subjected to wars supported by the U.S., repressive regimes supported by U.S., or subjected to economic pressure by the U.S.

Yet, the United States has traditionally relied on undocumented workers as a pool of cheap labor, a

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EDITORIAL

A Special Kind of Anger — and Dedication

Letter from the Editor

The shop is closed for the night. I have been sitting here next to the non-laggard teletype machine which chattered away during the day as if possessed of a dignity of its own — as if given the chance to atone for some of the insanity around it, and for a time and to a few, inject a small, compact amount of dignity and truth into a few selected pages that have been growing in intent and content over the past few weeks. It seems to be thinking of what has been said on it that speaks for all of us. But in the past it has only reached a few, who in many cases gave what they had to give. I suppose that means I've been thinking of our martyred dead, too.

In one hand I've been holding the rather terse explanation of the aims and goals of the Commeration Committee for the Black Panther Party as it appears in later pages here.

The other hand has been going through a constantly expanding collection of cards and letters from one or another area of distribution of the *Commemorator*. The list is rapidly growing, mostly from word of mouth, across the nation. Some of the letters from those saying a particular story touched a special, local nerve; or there were stories in the issue that brought back memories or dedication that the writer gained on an earlier occasion. Those who remembered say there was a special kind of anger displayed that seemed to come with them anytime they went together to a rally or demonstration. And, even now after all that time, people write who remembered portions of the Black Panther Party line with such emotion that they felt they must share what they were in those days with someone who remembered it, too, and commemorated its existence in print.

Waiting to pick it up again

These letters seem to be sort of a notification that, with the proper reasons in addition to the sentimentalization of remembrance, they've been waiting all this time to pick it up again and to stand by that line. Perhaps they will stand by it in a different way, as the years have passed since that time when open opinions in the streets were causing some kind of secret government organization to be happening. Perhaps the writers will stand by their dedication in such a way that a political change far beyond the reach of a newly demonstrated political mood to speak constructively of the need shown earlier in the Black Panther Party anger, and programmatically reflected in the emptiness of other kinds of forms the Party presence was rejecting.

We've read the opinions of many on those days in question. Violence or the capacity to do it, or the presence there of people who stated they were ready to do it, wasn't even on the agenda when the Panthers appeared. Whenever the Black Panther Party or its supporters or friends or volunteers appeared, that anger was available — in the breakfast program, for instance. There are hundreds who left their churches or peace groupings to go trooping into loaned facilities all over the nation to prepare a meal for our children.

Channel anger into constructive programs

Anger as an avocation simply didn't exist, but it was there. Perhaps it came opposed, but over and over it came to share in the work, making sure a warm meal before school was more than advertisement. It was a pattern of practice of our people to ensure that those who were born without the proverbial silver spoon could not only eat, but begin to spend some time in the movement. Their mentors were those whose deep-seated commitment to a cause included them in one of the natural laws of early history being rewritten by a people's anger, driving them to positive motion that a leadership recognized as such by the much-needed growth of the ability of those isolated by poverty and desolation, to reach out and touch the source of a growing enthusiasm of not just filling one's need, but filling in the days with ways designed to charge that constant anger with a more positive element than simple, hedonist, personal danger.

It was in places where the status of a growing rational political basis caused simple actions that fed the bodies of the needy with the rational part of the anger walking free in the community, that caused that ground to reach out and embrace people in arenas where the Black Panther program was beginning to take place and hold enemy forces back from unconcerned brutality that was used as a basis for unilateral action in places where the breakfast program began to take on an obvious but uneasy stand of impending death. Other organizations generated by government-funding and a charade of temporary government-aid attempted to force its way down on those who were becoming known as "Panther people."

It was when this crime of constructive overdetermination began to happen, a time Panther people assembled at Panther stations in the community, that Dr. Huey P. Newton began to notice some of the pumped-up programs in places far from Panther institutions that came long enough only to get a few names and move away. That's when Dr. Newton made his much-misquoted statement that sometimes he wished he never heard of the community breakfast programs. Most of the imitation Panther programs then and for a time were considered to expand. However, the Black Panther newsletters kept reaching genuine potential activists with Black Panther teachings, and they would write in as some people are beginning to do today. Without training or a heavy accent on political content, they simply got hold of a hall, put a copy of the program on the wall, and tentative Panther aid began to work its way in.

"Superfly" brought a new kind of benefit concert with rock stars, organized by poverty pimps driving the last of the big, shiny cars. It's not so bad the cars are gone, but where are the agencies, now that the people need them?

Panther programs vs. the government-sponsored agencies

The Panthers had made the program at the beginning, and the program began to make Black Panthers rather than coming to an end. One would suppose most of the end came from a highly artificial fear of some kind of loss of career. The Black Panther program and association was its own reward, and the beginning contained the start of its destination, which was harder to explain in an oppressed nation that began to blossom government-sponsored programs on every comer. When blacks thought the party was winning its way into the community and here to stay, gun expenditures and pretensions took on war-like dimensions. A trip through the Fillmore in those days showed three "poverty pimp" organizations every two blocks. They were budgeted for staff with educational benefits. "Superfly" brought a new kind of benefit concert with rock stars, organized by poverty pimps driving the last of the big, shiny cars. It's not so bad the cars are gone, but where are the agencies, now that the people need them?

There are people out there who haven't forgotten what happened. They still remember names, who came and when, who advertized the anger with dignity, a commodity that is no stranger in any poverty stricken community.

A Request to Readers on Behalf of the Movement

In contributing to the process of advancing and building on the positive aspects of the mass movement of the 60s, in which the Black Panther Party played a leading role, we increasingly look to our readership to tell their stories as it relates to that era. There has to be literally tens of thousands of people who have stories to tell; and, the *Commemorator*, as part of the process of advancing and building on those contributions of the

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Clinton's Medical Plan

Are the principles of Black Panther Party organizing being forced back into the community today through the speeches and political advances of the Chief Executive himself? President Clinton's "classless society" approach to comprehensive cradle-to-grave medical care, guaranteed for a lifetime within the United States, is offered as an alternative to the stiffly fought, one-payer Canadian system.

Clinton's plan uses a regional approach, in which organizations representing an entire population can, in fact, act as brokers between either the provider, or the government bureaucracy employing it, to an established grouping or district of citizens which may, at this reading, be a region either geographically or by any other nationally recognizable definition.

The Canadian system would avoid tens of billions in waste at the current reckoning of some experts, but would require the cooperation of the insurance providers and would allow a single tax to be levied to fund the program — two elements which appear to be mutually exclusive of each other. The lives of some 165 million Americans hang on the definition.

What if it were applied specifically to the all-black regions, which in some cases across the country provide higher than 9% of boundaried urban sprawl? Are not the very ideas set forth by Dr. Huey Newton (magnified in his 1970 speech at Boston College on black communalism), and the recent burst of affirmative motion toward black capitalist financial firms (called "carriers" — that take on de jure duties of an insurance company in the private sector), a doppelganger of his program?

It would seem that the medical care question could become quite an important realpolitic-lever in the face of restiveness on the part of the population or at least the sympathies of certain layers of it, with the outcome of bureaucratic decisions based upon the perceived individual and organizational political stance.

After all, the United States government did not hesitate to punish those in sympathy with the Black Panthers with tax audits and harassing prosecutions. Can health care be used in the same way? With the providers in place under a two-tiered system, the single-payer option is not available to the poor, and their death statistics, especially from diseases like cancer, will be immeasurably greater than those who can choose their own physician.

The reason for this is simple: if one is suffering from a treatable disease, as most cancers are, a single competent regime of chemotherapy maximizes longevity as well as the chances of recovery. In contrast, the constant changes in the identity of the doctor introduces unnecessary variables into a tricky ongoing fight for the cancer patient's health and life, where hoped for reactions to drugs are confused with symptoms of deeper illness, where fine adjustments in multiple-prescription treatments cannot be made, where timing is missed, where necessary information is not available, and the particular drugs are not purchased or made available, and the patient dies more from the "cure" than from the illness.

The President's health plan starts at the wrong end. It must start with the poor — and with education to expand the availability of professional services to all Americans. Each medical school will be made to take on students who could not otherwise afford to attend, providing a 10% override on scholarships, with the government providing financial aid, which would be paid back by the fledgling practitioner giving from four to eight years of service, or by carrying a certain number of impecunious patients or giving a certain number of days from their schedules for these patients, for life.

All these doctors go into one of the carrier organizations which act like insurance companies with the government as payor, while all doctors are made to give a certain amount of pro bonum time such that the Hippocratic oath gains legal sanction and the poor achieve access to their choice of doctors on a parity basis with everyone else through the carriers.

If we figure up the growing number of hours or cash contributions to purchase doctors, needed to provide non-paying patients with the same services as those who pay, the place where money begins changing hands inside already existing institutions is where employers, moving downward to provide medical care by contract, meet with this unilateral social contract. Bureaucratic waste, death and disease are all minimized using this approach, and the traditional role of the physician is bolstered.

The President's plan will result in low and middle income Americans facing definite limits in coverage amount, diseases covered, and choice of providers, due to the lack of consumer representation. This then creates a pool that allows it even to be called "universal coverage." Rather than universal care, these people will experience a sort of ancillary managed care system.

Under the current presentation, the Clinton Plan will also set up their own special payment structure, but then lays obstacles in its course. With these structures set, private non-profit groups will become de facto insurance companies acting as brokers between individuals and health plans offering a full range of regional care requiring huge amounts of capital, headed up through a few companies as health maintenance organizations (HMO's), as employers of the nation's medical system and its medical profession.

Who stands to lose is not only the patients, but the doctors who will lose their autonomy, their professional status, the ability to earn an income; as well as the black entrepreneur in business, who will be completely overwhelmed by the big money in the system, and forced to either separate themselves from the communities with which they identify, or to be responsible for thousands of deaths within them.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I ran across your newspaper in a little coffee shop; it was my first experience of running head long into anything close to the truth. I've been so used to the "double-speak" of regular newspapers that to hear the hard facts laid out so clearly was indeed a surprise.

As a tax paying citizen consumed by the ongoing struggle of staying afloat, I had my hands full, could see lots of problems but didn't know how they connected.

It took awhile to sink in how our military intervention into other countries and our huge foreign aid spending has set the foundation for the multinational capitalist corporations to be provided with the protection they need to pull out of the United States, taking American jobs with them. This gives them the opportunity to gain the benefit of cheap labor in other countries, plus cheaper overhead because they don't provide health and safety standards for the individual or for our ecology.

After raping the American economy, using and co-opting the American labor force until they get themselves positioned in foreign countries with legislative and tax advantages, insuring their ability to squeeze the last breath out of labor that they can, they bring us the "Enterprise Zones" to improve the economic conditions of our communities (this all said with a straight face). People like me, think they are about job creation, which is a bald-faced lie.

Thank you once again for saying it like it is. There is a lot of room in the world for straight talk. I suppose it is bold of me to say, but I think the people who make decisions and pass legislation have their hands in the wallets of capital interest. As far as I'm concerned we as the American people should hold both of these groups responsible for the suffocation of the American economy.

Leila Bracey
Stockton, Calif.

Dear Editor,

Why doesn't HUD have enough funds? The state of California is one of the richest states in the country. I personally don't blame HUD. I think the blame is on some of the landlords. When you go looking for a place and they see you're low income they laugh right in your face. Some areas are run down and should go to the low income.

I think it's so unfair. I can remember 20 years ago: three bedrooms for $130 a month.

Why doesn't the Berkeley Housing Authority write when they are out of funds and you are on the waiting list (for Section 8 housing)? Without me, they wouldn't have a job. Think about it.

Oakland, Calif.

[from the Editor: As you know, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is a cabinet-level, federal versus state agency. HUD operates through our federal tax dollars, which by law should give the public some say so about their policies. Satellite Senior Homes in Oakland, Calif. for example, is mandated to follow federal policies and guidelines to receive tax dollars to build and operate a service such as government-subsidized housing for senior citizens. The mandatory meal program run by Satellite Homes that Ms. Jones is currently fighting (see Commemorator *Vol.3 No.8), comes under federal policies for Section 8. HUD could override Satellite Home's decision to attempt to evict tenants who do not comply with their mandatory meal program. However, when government policies encourage landlords to make millions of dollars each year in profits off the misery of low income people — you don't just go to the landlord and lay the blame. You must go to the source of the problem, because the responsible federal agencies have the power to put a stop to it. They have not, because they know there would be many more Ms. Jones' following her example. Think about it.]*

U.S. Government, Texas, NAACP and the KKK Locked In A Strange Foursome

Galveston, Texas — When does a tactical alliance mean strategic defeat? Ask the members of the Texas State NAACP, which finds its attorneys on both sides of a fight involving the Ku Klux Klan and the State Attorney General. The fight threatens not only to destroy the NAACP from within and without but to strengthen both the state government and the KKK.

It began when Attorney General Dan Morales brought legal action accusing Michael Lowe, Grand Dragon of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan Realm of Texas in Waco, where 86 were killed at the hands of Federal Bureau of Investigation and Texas Department of Public Safety only months ago, of using threats and intimidation to block a federal court's order to desegregate East Texas public housing, one which the Department of Housing and Urban Development, lacking funds to build or acquire new low income housing stock, has sought to enforce.

Bruce Roberts

Despite threats and violence, African-Americans have a history of fighting for social and economic equality in housing, jobs, education and public facilities, etc.

Only government and Klan will win

Texas NAACP'S leader Gary Bledsoe, acting as special counsel for Morales, joined the prosecution, seeking the KKK's membership and financial and other documents. NAACP General Counsel Anthony Griffin undertook to represent the Klan, to resist the document seizure and protect the Klan against the government, leaving the legal staff of the organization hopelessly divided and fighting among themselves. If the Klan were to win, the NAACP's black constituents, especially those desirous of scarce and dwindling government funded housing, would lose. If the government were allowed to seize the records it desires, the thirty four year old sanctity of membership records won in the landmark case NAACP v. Alabama would be a dead issue. The matter takes on added significance with the unbridled exercise of government power in the Waco affair.

The Klan grand dragon was reportedly pleased that his attorney was black, a circumstance representing excellent public relations and press management, not to mention court strategy, in the opinion of experienced court watcher Dr. Christopher Day, Chairman of the Writers and Scholars Institute and one-time ACLU observer.

'We need to organize ourselves'

"Residents of South Central Los Angeles remember how NAACP representatives sold out to President Bush when he offered enterprise zones while arresting tens of thousands of protesters, killing and wounding thousands more," said Tony Love, local representative of the Los Angeles Equal Justice Committee. "The NAACP and a myriad of government and government-funded agencies used their privileged position in such a way as

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Clinton's New Student Work Study Program: 90% Wage Subsidy

"They're making scabs of all of us"

The social ferment and economic decline of the 1960s and 70s gave rise to a new proliferation of educational programs in the nation. With the loss of manufacturing jobs and the expansion of the working population came the need to occupy an otherwise idle potential workforce while their neighborhoods were being burned down around them for the insurance. While the work of the nation was being reorganized to service through the "war on poverty," government programs were designed that would promote educational opportunities, thereby silencing civil rights activists seeking parity in that arena, at the same time removing them from the pool of viable participants to lead the suffering oppressed minorities of the urban slums, giving a few the ability to succeed, leaving the rest behind where murder topped the list of causes of young, black, male deaths, holding them in place through demands to pay back government loans.

And while that was going on, the quality of the education, both in terms of its preparation of students for the job market, and in terms of their more generalized skills, was deteriorating. The value of the education in terms of post-graduate employability declined as well, because the jobs simply no longer existed in sufficient numbers to counter the last-hired, first-fired syndrome by which blacks in the United States have been plagued throughout the post-Civil War history of the nation.

Members of organizations like the Black Panther Party suffered systematic extermination at the same time under COINTELPRO (counterintelligence programs), after building community programs which dealt directly with the needs of millions of poor minority citizens. A small number continue to call for the organization of the communities.

But the ideal of education as portion of the American Dream, by which blacks would gain a toehold toward respectability and economic security, had made a strong imprint on the mind of the black populations, to the point where they not only took part in the open enrollment offered by junior colleges offering Associate's Degrees, but they have continued in increasing numbers to attempt to join the 7000 black elected officials and the small black business community of the nation, even though conditions for blacks in the nation have become palpably worse to the point of mass personal degradation; rather than organize in their communities that could raise the communities themselves, rather than just the best and brightest of the blacks within them.

To facilitate the continuation of this trend in spite of worsening economic conditions, federal law will provide, commencing in the Spring of 1994, that all college work-study programs will be 10% employer-funded, while the government will pay 75% of the student's hourly wage, and the school, 15%. This program, heralded under the rubric of aid to education by those who have bought into the idea of individual advancement, is being coupled with mandatory work programs which provide volunteers to the community to replace those who used to get paid, lowering wages and conditions of work for all, and displacing the next higher economic strata in the community.

> ***Mandatory work programs...provide volunteers to the community to replace those who used to get paid, lowering wages and conditions of work for all, and displacing the next higher economic strata in the community.***

"They're making scabs of all of us," said one student who asked not to be identified. "How can private employers be expected to continue to pay the full price of labor when others employ students at one-tenth the cost? It makes employment for post-graduates very difficult to find, leaving us in debt with no way to escape the very cycle of poverty we went to school to overcome."

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Artist on Display

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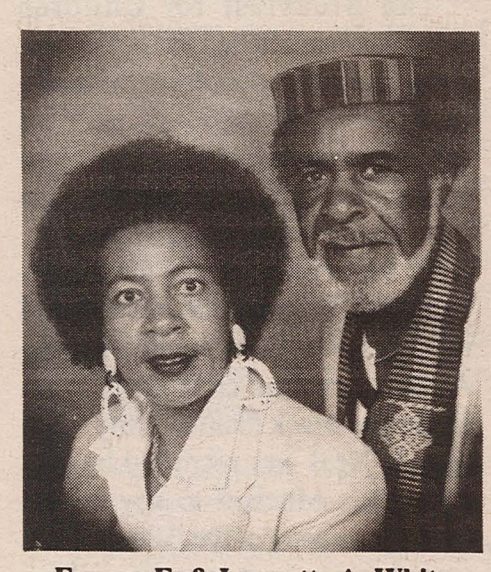

Eugene E. & Lynnette A. White

Rarely does art in today's commercialized world express the feelings, hopes and triumph of an oppressed people. The works of Mr. White's express just that type of intensity. White is not just a one dimensional artist — his journal, Kujiona (to see one's self) reflects a person with strong roots to his past with a vision toward the future.

By Eugene E. White

My story is of my folks which began in the community of St. Luke in rural Arkansas (although our address was Rt. 1, Ozan, Arkansas). We were among each other working in the fields. Our folks were the field workers. They were family. They were parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. We were among each other working in the fields, walking in the mud together, and going to church on Sundays. It was in this environment that we met and shared our dreams and thoughts about the world. My paintings on canvas reflect many experiences of my people. My love seeing this beauty developed and grew at an early age. It kept growing even after I left home. I returned often to revisit my people. These are people whom I once thought that I was ashamed of (this goes to show you what ignorance of one's own culture can make you think and feel). One must wonder what if the black people who were brought to this country had been a part of the heritage of the settlers — would the blues exist as we know it today? No one knows.

The Sociology Of Rap Music

By E. T. Drake

Rap music first came onto the mainstream public scene with the release of the movie *Flashdance* in 1984 (but the genesis of the music came directly out of the black ghettos of urban America, nearly two decades earlier; basically, it's a mixture of poetry and slang). Although the movie wasn't about rap, it contained a scene in which white working class urbanites gathered on a sidewalk to watch some black teens breakdancing. White urbanites across the country were charmed by the scene, and the acrobatics of low income blacks doing a not-so-typical, typical street performance. However, the rap music itself hadn't exactly caught on with the American public by the time these same white urbanites saw their grade school sons pulling out cardboard and taking the baby powder out of the bathroom so that they, too, could do head spins with ease.

A couple of years later, rap music started hitting the mainstream through performers such as Run DMC, LL Cool J (Ladies Love Cool James), and other idols of "Ego Rap." Pre-metal head junior high school kids wore T-shirts with lyrics, such as Run DMC's "I'm the King of Rap/There is no higher/I won't stop rapping 'til I retire..." These junior high school kids were on the fringes of even whiter kids who listened to Duran Duran and hung out on West 4th Street in New York City, right outside of the train station, considering it hanging in the Village. White urbanites weren't so charmed by it anymore, although the parents of these kids rarely said anything because they were, after all, liberal. Whether or not they noticed the 40-ounce beer bottles left around and the missing mouthwash from their bathrooms after their 13 year old kids' Halloween party is still undetermined. The entire thing took on a new feel when tag graffiti was everywhere. The prominent balloon lettering on sides of buildings, advertising clandestine fame of homeboys was everywhere, and often turned into territorial issues in some parts (God help "Joker" if he put his tag over the tag of "Creed," and no one was going to help either of them if they got busted.) A law was passed in New York State, for instance, that forbade the sale of spray paint to minors, and it became a campaign issue in cities' elections.

It moved far enough into the suburbs to warrant a front page article in the *New York Times Magazine* over who really listened to rap music, determining that those suburban kids who still pegged their pants and wore hightops were the real fans. Yes, rap was moving into the suburbs, and what's more, it wasn't just ego rap any more, it was strictly ghetto rap, with a mixture of rebelliousness, hedonism and black nationalism. The kids who listened to Duran Duran were now listening to NWA (Niggers With an Attitude) and Public Enemy. The kids who had listened to Run DMC were now into the metal scene, listening to Megadeath.

NWA and Public Enemy began breaking through the LA gang scene and as far into mainstream as songs like "Cop Killer" and "Fuck the Police" would ever go. Their albums were picked up by homeboys and hard-core fans alike. Public Enemy's most recent album, *Apocalypse,* was advertised on New York City subway billboards, next to the prevalent graffiti symbols of New York's legendary underground anarchist squatter band, Missing Foundation.

MTV began devoting an hour a night to rap in their "YO, MTV RAP" section of late night programming, not to be confused with their regular hours of video, or the "Metal Head Ball" section, etc. Other cable channels began devoting themselves to rap, the only place where you could see or hear music that talked about their boys leaving the 'hood to live in the white world, and abandoning their homeboys. These sentiments are no surprise to those who actually know and listen to these rap groups, as abandoning the 'hood to make money is no forgivable thing; it's not moving up, it's leaving behind.

Rap scandal hit the national scene when a record store owner in Florida was arrested for selling II Live Crew's album, *As Horny as they Wanna Be,* to an eleven year old — admittedly obscene lyrics and all. There was talk of censorship versus freedom of speech. Nobody ever said the II Live Crew were talented, in fact, most people said they were repulsive, but their record sales went up amid news article after news article. After all was said and

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When Justice is Incidental

by Verin Lewis

Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO), established by J. Edgar Hoover in 1956, moved FBI operations beyond the covert and intrusive practice of maintaining surveillance of U.S. citizens deemed "un-American" by the agency and into the business of political repression. With a mandate to "disrupt, disorganize and neutralize" anyone that the FBI and J. Edgar Hoover decided represented a threat to the national security, in post-war America that meant anyone tagged as Communists or a Communist sympathizer.

By the end of the 1950s the scope of COINTELPRO widened to include disrupting the activities of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement. Suddenly the FBI turned the very American citizens who attempted to attain freedom into what the FBI labeled "enemies of freedom."

After the election of Richard Nixon in 1968, J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI's COINTELPRO program to expand repression of organizations in the African-American Community, especially the Black Panther Party. The FBI expanded the COINTELPRO budget. COINTELPRO increased its forces and focused on the Black Panther Party. An FBI directive sent to field offices on November 25, 1968 specifically ordered "imaginative and hard hitting counterintelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP." In the last days of 1968 Hoover proclaimed "the Black Panther Party is the single greatest threat to the internal security of the United States." This was paramount to a declaration of war on the Black Panther Party by the FBI. Under the COINTELPRO program, the total force of the FBI would now be brought to bear on the Black Panther Party.

Far from J. Edgar Hoover's Washington, D.C. and the COINTELPRO machinations of the FBI, Bobby Rush, who belonged to Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and worked under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael, was seeking a way to mobilize gangs in Chicago as a political force. He wanted to motivate these gangs to take political action.

Stokely Carmichael, who had become a member of the Central Committee of the Black Panther Party, made arrangements for Bobby Rush to travel to California to meet with those in charge of the Black Panther Party. Rush was impressed with both the style and the substance of the Black Panther Party, but he was turned down cold on the issue of establishing a chapter in Chicago. He was simply told that the party already had a chapter in that area of the country. Rush returned to Chicago determined to set up a chapter. Rush felt that his understanding of the black community in Chicago would allow him to "out-organize" the ones that the Panthers had delegated to represent them in the "Windy City."

BPP News Service

BPP Free Breakfast Programs served black and low income areas, and were considered by COINTELPRO to be "potentially the greatest threat to efforts to neutralize the BPP and destroy what it stands for."

Understanding that a critical aspect to any Panther Party chapter was a base of operation, Rush located and rented an office on West Madison. It was Bobby Rush and Bob Brown, the person who was in charge of the other chapter in Chicago, who contacted Fred Hampton. Fred was approached by Rush and Brown because of his abilities as an orator. Fred had natural leadership skills and the charismatic element that allows a leader to move people on just the strength of his character. He had the ability to put forth the truth in such a direct fashion. On being questioned about the need for Panthers to arm themselves, Fred addressed the issue: "Yes, we do defend our office and we do defend our homes. This is a constitutional right. Everybody has it. Nothing funny about that. The only reason they get mad at the Black Panther Party when they do it, is for the simple reason that we're political and they don't want to admit this. There are a lot of young organizations around, but we are a political organization. We are an organization that understands that politics is war without bloodshed, and war is politics with bloodshed."

With an office now established, Fred Hampton and Bobby Rush began organizing people to help them. With Fred Hampton as their spokesman, they hung the Panther sign on the door. Although not associated with the national party until later, Hampton and Rush entered the civil rights network of Chicago defining themselves as Panthers.

The chapter was officially taken under the national party wing when Fred Hewitt, "Masai," the Minister of Education for the national party, was traveling around the country giving political education to new chapters. During one of these flights Masai and a party member he was traveling with queried a stewardess about the similarity of the distance between Cuba and Oakland and New York and Cuba. The pilot was alerted by the paranoid stewardess to a possible highjacking. The plane took a detour and landed at Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Masai landed up in the Cook County Jail without benefit of legal counsel or the funds to post bail. He contacted David Hilliard in Oakland who then contacted Bobby Rush. Rush got Masai out of jail. Masai hung on for a week or so, providing the Chicago chapter with "PE" classes. More important, the Chicago chapter was officially regionalized by the national party in Oakland. Lines of communication opened with the leadership. The Chicago chapter received Panther newspapers, as well as other literature.

Fred ("Chairman Fred") Hampton at the age of twenty, was now Deputy Chairman of the Illinois branch of the Black Panther Party. Bobby ("Rush") Rush was now Deputy Minister of Defense. Fred Hampton was a born leader and orator. He spoke from his heart to the needs of the community. Bobby Rush brought to the chapter the organizational skills needed. Fred Hampton's spirit charged the chapter and energized the Panthers working in Chicago. The chapter in Chicago thrived.

The now official Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party began to work closely with Oakland so that the party could work in a more unilateral fashion. By setting up "Serve the People" programs such as "Breakfast for Children" and medical clinics, both the Oakland and Chicago chapters brought services that would benefit black and poor people in their communities.

When interviewed about the progress made by the Black Panther Party in Chicago, Fred replied "People learn by example. I don't think anyone can argue with that. I believe what Huey P. Newton said, 'People learn by observation and participation.' We need to do more action than we need to talk. We didn't talk about a Breakfast For Children Program, we've got one."

The Breakfast for Children programs established by the Panther Party chapters soon drew the attention of the FBI who directed field offices to formulate specific counterintelligence tactics to disrupt what the FBI called a "nefarious activity."

To further the aims of the COINTELPRO program, the FBI stepped up its recruitment of members of the African-American community to infiltrate the Black Panther Party. William O'Neal was recruited by FBI agent Ray Mitchell to spy on the Chicago chapter of the BPP. O'Neal was an easy recruit as he was willing to work off a rap for stealing a car and going joy riding over state lines. O'Neal joined the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

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ARCHIVES

COINTELPRO — "Disrupt, Misdirect, Neutralize" Black Liberation Struggle

"...the chief investigative branch of the federal government (FBI), which was charged by law with investigating crimes and preventing criminal conduct, itself engaged in lawless tactics and responded to deep-seated social problems by fomenting violence and unrest."—Final report Senate Intelligence Committee April 23, 1976.

On March 7, 1974 seven xeroxed memoranda detailing FBI plans to "disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize" Black militant organizations, were released to NBC newsman Carl Stern who had sued the Justice Department for them under the Freedom of Information Act.

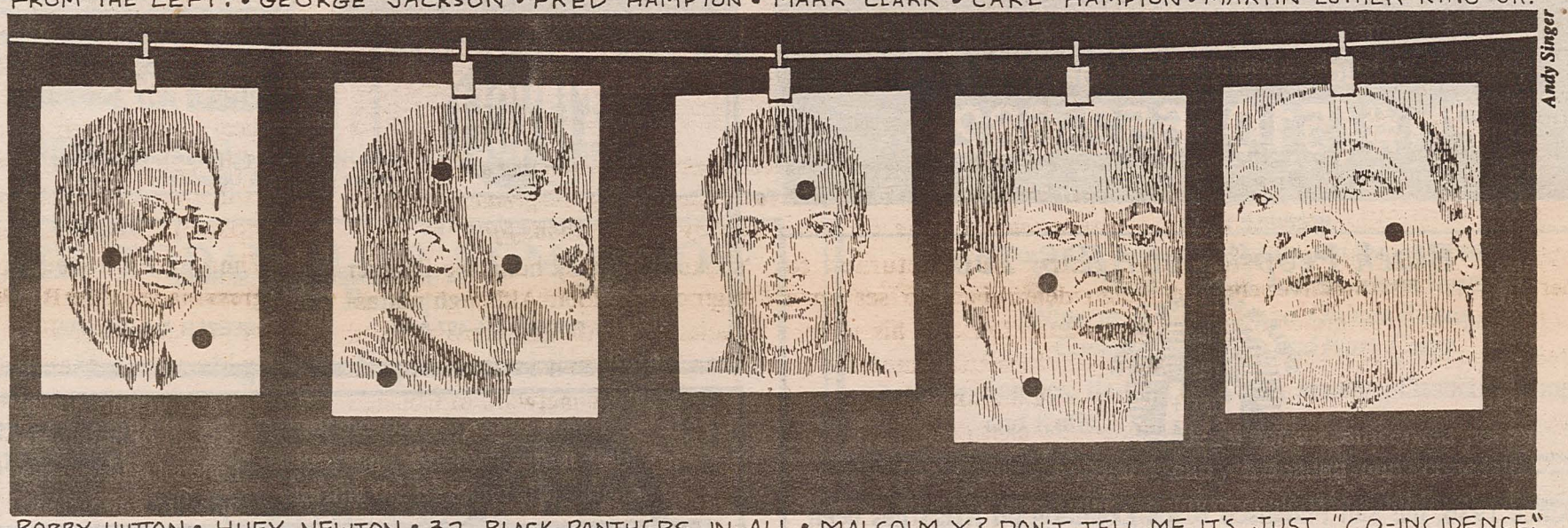
The memoranda, though heavily censored, exposed the Bureau's ruthless Counterintelligence Program to destroy the Black liberation struggle in America. Below we reprint excerpts from an August, 1967, memo authorizing the initiation of COINTELPRO actions against Black organizations, and portions of an interview with ex-provocateur for the LAPD, Louis Tackwood, who had served against the black liberation movement. Tackwood initially got involved in crime at a young age for joy riding in a stolen vehicle. The LAPD used this misdemeanor, threatened to send him back to jail if he did not cooperate in their part in carrying out a local counterintelligence operation. Both documents are taken from the Black Panther Intercommunal News Service (April 6, 1980).

AUGUST 25, 1967 PERSONAL ATTENTION TO ALL OFFICES

Offices receiving copies of this letter are instructed to immediately establish a control file, captioned as above, and to assign responsibility for following and coordinating this new counterintelligence program to an experienced and imaginative Special Agent well versed in investigations relating to Black nationalist, hate-type organizations. The field office control file used under this program may be maintained in a pending inactive status until such time as a specific operation or technique is placed under consideration for implementation.

The purpose of this new counterintelligence endeavor is to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder. The activities of all such groups of intelligence interest to this Bureau must be followed on a continuous basis...

When an opportunity is apparent to disrupt or neutralize Black Nationalist hate-type organizations through the cooperation of established local news media contacts or through such contact with sources available to the Seat of Government, in every instance careful attention must be given to the proposal to insure the targeted group is disrupted, ridiculed, or discredited through the publicity and not merely publicized...


FROM THE LEFT: • GEORGE JACKSON • FRED HAMPTON • MARK CLARK • CARL HAMPTON • MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
Andy Singer
BOBBY HUTTON • HUEY NEWTON • 32 BLACK PANTHERS IN ALL • MALCOLM X? DON'T TELL ME IT'S JUST "CO-INCIDENCE!"

Interview with Louis Tackwood

by Black Panther Party Intercommunal News Service

Q: When did you become active in any way working with law enforcement agencies to disrupt and destroy the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: That must have been around 1968...

Q: Who were you working for at the time and what kind of activities were you involved in?

Tackwood: I was working for SII, that's Special Identification and Investigation. SII works out of the Los Angeles Police Department office. At the time CCS (the LAPD's Criminal Conspiracy Section) was still working on the Robert Kennedy killing. So all the direct activities against the Panthers were handled by SII.

Q: What were your activities with SII at the time? What was your assignment?

Tackwood: Well, my assignment began when we thought we had put the Muslims to rest as a militant organization. Right around this time I think the Panthers were just starting to grow in Los Angeles and were coming in conflict with the United Slaves (US) organization. The US organization had already been infiltrated and was being helped in every way possible by the LAPD.

It was a "snitch" organization at the top. When I say "snitch" organization, I mean that a lot of youngsters which were coming into the US organization were being snitched off. I think Karenga (Ron Karenga, the head of the US organization) had various meetings with (former Los Angeles Mayor) Yorty and (former Los Angeles chief of police) Parker. He (Karenga) was a "good guy!!"

Q: In other words, Karenga was informing on the people in his own organization?

Tackwood: Yeah, right. Like who's got guns here and who's arm robbing there. But he was supposed to be "good" for the community. So it was very easy to get him to take his organization and start a war against the Panthers. They needed somebody familiar with all the elements in the community, and the US organization had a lot of ex-Muslims and ex-teenage gang members. I knew most of them.

During this period the police were shooting Panthers left and right, in cars or wherever they could catch them. They were shooting them down as fast as they could find them, and the verdict would always be "justifiable homicide." The US organization was ambushing Panthers, too, in this and that place. So it was a nice war.

Into this came a few good Panther leaders like Bunchy Carter, cats who would go to college and speak there instead of only just dealing with the ghetto and the ghetto-type people whom, you know, the police weren't scared of because most had records or they could get them anyway. Bunchy was getting the colleges together, like organizing BSAs (Black Student Alliances) on different college campuses and actually starting to build a nucleus. Now that was total danger to the LAPD, or whoever was giving them their orders, so the order went out to kill...

Q: Did you know specially that Bunchy Carter and John Huggins would be killed by the US organization on January 17, 1969?

Tackwood: I didn't know the date. You see, there were so many Panthers getting shot down and killed that there was no way of keeping up on who was getting killed when.

Q: So you worked as a liaison between LAPD and the US organization? How long did it last?

Tackwood: Oh, that didn't last long. I had gotten into little hassles here and there, you know, and I had to leave, come back, leave and come back. So by the time I got back, the US organization had almost ceased to exist as a functional organization. I soon heard an order come down for the police to break them up. See what I'm saying? In other words, "Karenga, you're no longer needed so let's get rid of you." And they did.

Q: During the period of time, 1969-70, you weren't involved directly in activities against the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: Well, indirectly and directly. It was a thing where it wasn't a direct involvement. It was like a shadowing involvement. In other words, it was on the fringes.

Q: Could you describe it?

Tackwood: During this period of time, I had gone back out and started passing myself off as an arms expert, a gun runner or whatever you want to call it. Like, if you knew

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"Raising the Consciousness of the People"

By JoNina Abron

BPP News Service

Bobby Seale, BPP co-founder and chair, delivering a press conference in West Oakland following the 1968 police murder of Li'l Bobby Hutton.

Editor's Note: The following is part of an ongoing series of excerpts and articles from Raising the Consciousness of the People, *the first chapter of* Voices from the Underground: Insider Histories of the Vietnam Era Underground Press, *by JoNina M. Abron. Abron was the last editor of the* Black Panther Intercommunal News Service *and a member of the Black Panther Party for nine years.*

She writes vividly of the history of not only the Intercommunal News Service *but some of the history of the Black Panther Party as well. This segment begins at the August 1989 funeral for Dr. Huey P. Newton, continued from our last issue.*

Moving to the podium and putting a black beret on his head...BPP co-founder and chair Bobby Seale brought the congregation to its feet in tribute when he raised his clenched fist and shouted the Panther rallying cry, "All power to the people!"

Just as he had in the early days, in his familiar, strident cadence, Bobby then recited from memory the entire BPP Ten Point Platform and Program. For a few minutes, it seemed as though the congregation at Allen Temple Church was, in fact, at a Panther rally in 1968. After the funeral, ex-Panthers, family members, and friends gathered for a reunion where we talked over old times and exchanged information about our lives since party days. Later that afternoon, ex-BPP political prisoner Johnny Spain and I were among the guests on a program commemorating the legacy of the BPP on KPFA Radio, Berkeley. Johnny, who spent nearly 22 consecutive years behind bars, explained how, in the late 60's, while serving a prison sentence for a California murder, he joined the BPP because of his friendship with black prison leader George Jackson.

Black Panther Party founded to oppose police brutality

Waiting to begin the KPFA program and feeling relaxed after the funeral observance and more reflective as a result of the emotions of the occasion, we laughed at the headlines as we passed around 20-year old issues of *The Black Panther*:

"Nationwide Harassment of Panthers by Pig Power Structure"

"Fascist Action Against the People of Sacramento"

"White Mother Country Radicals"

During the program, while discussing the history of the newspaper and the party, I said that I owed Huey and Bobby a great debt for starting the BPP and allowing me to participate in one of the most important black liberation movements in United States history. As we reminisced, I recalled the party's beginnings in 1966 and my own introduction to the party six years later.

Huey and Bobby founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, ("Self-Defense" having been dropped from the name in 1968 to help give the party legitimacy as a political organization), because, as they later wrote in the party's initial Ten Point Platform and Program, "We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community."

The idea for the party's name came from a black self-defense group in Lowndes County, Alabama, which used a black panther as its symbol. The panther is known as an animal that attacks only in self-defense.

The two young men belonged to the community of southern blacks whose families had migrated to Oakland during World War II and afterwards, in search of jobs in the naval shipyards and other industries. Huey's family came from Louisiana and Bobby's from Texas. Trying to escape the rigid segregation of the South, these blacks became victims nonetheless of California-style discrimination—on the job, in housing, and in education. In addition, by the mid-60's, the Oakland Police Department had recruited several whites, also from the South, who brought their racist attitudes with them. Police brutality in Oakland's black communities was rampant.

Huey and Bobby formed the BPP partly as a response to this rise of white police brutality—which was occurring not only in Oakland but in urban black communities across America—and partly because they believed, as did many black youth at the time, that the tactics of non-violence successfully used by the civil rights movement in the South would not be effective in the large cities of the urban North.

BPP News Service

"Huey must be set free" — a rallying cry of the 60s.

At the time, it was legal for a person to carry an unconcealed gun in California. Point Number 7 of the BPP platform called for "an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people," and advocated "organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality." It said further, "The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States legislates the right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self-defense."

Huey, Bobby, and other Panthers conducted armed "community patrols of the police," during which they would observe police arrests and harassment of blacks and advise those arrested or harassed of their legal rights. Huey became famous, (or infamous, depending on one's perspective,) for standing on street corners, armed, quoting citizens' rights from a lawbook as outraged police looked on.

White power structure response

The black community had mixed reactions to gun-toting Panthers. Many thought, as I did initially, that they were crazy and would get themselves plus innocent bystanders killed. Others believed that we blacks had no recourse other than arming ourselves against mounting police brutality.

The white power structure was less divided. To them, the sight of armed black men was terrifying. White women might have been reminded of slave revolts and slaves who joined the Union Army during the Civil War. The California power structure under the leadership of then-Governor Ronald Reagan struck back. Legislation aimed at disarming the BPP, known as the Mulford bill, was authored and proposed by East Bay legislator Don Mulford. The bill sought to change existing law by making it illegal for an unlicensed person to carry a loaded gun, concealed or unconcealed, in a public place.

On May 2, 1967, an armed contingent of Panthers led by Bobby Seale marched into the California legislature in Sacramento to protest the Mulford bill. Later, on the steps of the state capitol, Bobby read the party's statement protesting the bill, "Executive Mandate No. 1," later published in *The Black Panther*. The Mulford bill was later passed.

Nearing the end of my freshman year at Baker University in Baldwin, Kansas, I saw the televised footage of armed Panthers marching into the California legislature. The BPP, which had been a local group until then, gained national attention, and Panther chapters began to appear in major cities across the country.

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Immigrants Attacked

Continued from page 1

pool which has produced billions of dollars in profits through generations, whether the Irish who mined Pennsylvania's coal, or the Chinese who built the country's railroads, or the Mexican, Central American and Caribbean immigrants who harvest U.S. crops.

At the same time, U.S. industrial plants and agribusiness are increasingly moving to third world nations, paying even lower wages, leaving large segments of the U.S. workforce without a livelihood, a policy the U.S. government has encouraged through such policies as low-interest loans, tax breaks and grants to foreign business promotion groups. Many union leaders, and the AFL-CIO itself, have fallen for this illusion with slogans like "Buy American," and support for bills and government measures to restrict immigration. The media have focussed attention on the image of "foreign" workers "stealing" American jobs — rather than on the American-owned companies racing to exploit cheaper labor.

Jumping on this bandwagon are a slew of California politicians, such as Senator Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein and State Treasurer, Kathleen Brown, as well as the U.S. Attorney General, Janet Reno. Sylvia Ramirez, organizer for the Latino Civil Rights Coalition in San Francisco, Calif., which was recently formed to fight the redbaiting campaign of Latino immigrants headed up by California's Governor Pete Wilson, stated "Pete Wilson's so-called Control Plan is mainly about scapegoating undocumented workers, mostly Latinos. According to a recent study that appeared in the *New York Times*, there are more immigrants coming into the United States from Europe through Canadian boarders than are coming in through Mexico. It's barbaric for the governor to talk about denying access to public education and health care to children because their parents are not U.S. citizens."

The Undocumented Worker in the American Economy

Immigration laws have also been used to keep wages down. From 1942 to 1964 the Department of Labor used the "Bracero" Program to control and direct the flow of contracted Mexican migrant workers — known as braceros— into the United States. The governments of the U.S. and Mexico themselves, negotiated contracts between growers and workers, on the grounds that U.S. farm workers had left the fields in droves to fight in World War II, and then the Korean War, or work in the defense-related industries that kept the wars going. The Secretary of Labor was supposed to certify that there weren't enough U.S. workers at the time, but in practice the jobs were never well advertised in the U.S., and an artificial labor shortage was created as an excuse to bring in migrant workers, who the growers knew would work more cheaply anyway.

As a result, the pay rate for workers in bracero-dominated crops stayed level for years, and in some cases even dropped. The Bracero Program was supposed to be a "temporary" wartime measure, but with grower interest Congress extended it time after time, until finally further extension was defeated and the program was officially shut down in 1964.

As a response to the mass of unemployed on the border created by the end of the program, U.S. industrialists proposed the creation of a free trade zone on the U.S.-Mexican border that would both fulfill U.S. manufacturers' need for cheap labor and create jobs for Mexico's unemployed.

Thus was born the Border Industrialization Program (BIP) in 1965, with the "maquiladora" system of twin plants; one on either side of the border. Labor-intensive sweatshops were to be located in Mexico and used for sewing, welding, gluing and assembling. The products were then shipped back to the U.S. for distribution.

At least 1,300 U.S.-owned factories, employing nearly 500,00 workers, now operate in this zone. In less than a decade, Nogales, a Mexican border town south of Arizona, has became a center of international commerce.

In this border zone, the idea for the North American Free Trade Zone, currently enshrined in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) for which President Clinton is now seeking Congressional approval.

Who is the Real Enemy?

Governor Wilson's reliance on the traditional bogey of "foreign invaders" in the wake of images of shivering Chinese immigrants shipwrecked on Long Island, as he stands before T.V. cameras with binoculars, pointing, for all the world like George C. Scott as "Patton," is yet another example of a traditional American method of scapegoating.

With increased poverty and joblessness across the United States (poverty is up 30% over the last year), other politicians are following suit — from New York's Alphonse D'Amato to California's Dianne Feinstein, even as President Clinton calls for support of NAFTA, leaving the real enemies in an American system which profits by racism and scapegoating untouched.

Why is Immigration a Red Herring?

A red herring is persiflage, smoke screen, bait, thrown out to catch your attention while something, often even more insidious, is going on behind your back — while you are distracted.

In the case of immigration, it's critical that we not be fooled by the immigration smoke screen; we must cast it away, every time it comes up — by simply shining the light of the facts on it.

When someone, in ignorance, says, "But those immigrants are taking our jobs, point out that the job you work belongs to the company you work for — it was there before you were hired, and it's likely to be there after you're fired and long gone. The immigrant didn't take your job, the man who owned the job took it from you and gave it to someone else, often for lower pay, someone most likely unorganized, not unionized and less likely to demand their rights to things like health and safety features on the job. That's why you see some immigrants with lung disease, missing fingers, toes, hands and feet, skin rashes and unexplained bleeding and coughing fits. The records are filled with migrant children born with unexplained birth defects, and the adults, by U.S. government statistics, die at an average age of 41.

If you've lost "your job" blame the people with the real power to take it away, the employer. Blame a business policy dominant in this country; from the local to national level and internationally, that says the best way to increase your profits is by cutting workers' pay, lowering the workers' salary, taking your profits out of working people's paycheck.

It is in the search for cheap labor, fueled by this cannibalistic policy, that causes you to lose "your job" to an immigrant or anyone else starved or forced into submission to the point they will work for less, much less than you will. In some places, in this country, there are those who will work for only a drink (liquor) or some other drug at the end of the day. They are "coolies" and if you want to see how far this pursuit of cheap labor can and will go if we let it, study the coolie societies of the far east.

Enterprise zones offer the poor up as free labor in places like West Oakland, Calif., and Del Paso Heights of Sacramento, Calif. Prison labor pays workers $2 to $3 an hour to do work that used to pay $18.00 per hour. Welfare recipients right here in the U.S., millions of them, are being forced to work for no more than their current welfare check for private corporations.

Oh, you got skills and a highly skilled job, not easy to replace? The Clinton Administration is putting through a plan that will put college graduates who have student loans to work at your job, at minimum wage, and call it "community service" to pay back the loan.

The fact is that your job is more likely to be taken by an American in prison, school, on welfare, or unemployed and living in an enterprise zone, than by a Mexican. While wages are being driven down, we are being told, don't pay any attention to the wage cutting — look over there at those immigrants taking "your jobs" and taxes.

We have to stop the rush for cheap labor now, for any working person, prisoner, welfare recipient or Mexican or Haitian, or Russian, the standard must be set for wages, health and safety guarantees on the job, and held to no matter what. It must start now with us.

You don't know how to stop it, call us. We'll show you how you can make the difference, today. Let's stop the free fall of wages, living and working conditions for us all. Don't fall for the hype.

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Editorial

Continued from page 2

90s, is very interested in each story in order to gain the many insights of that era to advance, today, the goals and objectives of the BPP.

The *Commemorator* is interested in your experience during the Black Panther years. We are requesting information from persons with Black Panther Party knowledge or background as part of the program in which the editor and other members of the *Commemorator* staff are now involved, to disseminate the truth about those years, and these years as well.

We also know that there are still paranoia, apprehension and cynicism among many of those who participated or supported the BPP movement in which so many of our best people gave their all. Understanding this, we still look to those who would like to remain anonymous but would like to tell their stories.

We seek the stories because there is so much incomplete or outright fallacious material still on display in the nation under the Black Panther Party name. A book is in the offing as one part of an attempt to proclaim a portion of living national political history. It will contain a section of volunteered information from those who shared in making this unique organizational form that was sweeping through the country. As many of you know, it caused, on one hand, hope and positive participation, and on the other, scorn and apprehension.

There are many questions of fact and idea needed for a history such as the one under contemplation. Without imposing a questionnaire, your writing will be of most use with considerations like the following woven into your personal and organizational story:

Were you a member of the BPP? Were you a sympathizer, a friend, an enemy? Did you hold office during the Panther heyday? Were you a victim of prosecution or attack as a result of your association? How did your family and friends react? Were your Party proclivities and activities known on your job, or at church or school? Did you display your affection for the Party, or what did you do to promote its program? When did it begin? How did it go and when did it end, or did it? How do you feel today through the grid of considerations from the Black Panther Party period?

Those interested in seeing the scenes of an often misrepresented period of history gain the understanding it once had, and still merits, may regard this as an effort to set the record straight among a population becoming more and more acclimatized to legend, braggadocio and venomous retaliation. Professional writers with objective determination will be working with the proposed project. Those active in the effort are already in receipt of a "hard" offer toward publication, and have every reason to expect more, since the purpose of the publication is historical and scholarly as well as full of determination to reach as broad and balanced an audience as possible, with objectively factual information concerning the period.

The *Commemorator* will also announce from time to time various requests for voluntary participation on further projects. All Power to the People.

All information can be sent to:
Melvin Dickson, Editor
Commemorator
4432 Telegraph Ave., PO Box 62
Oakland, CA 94609

Note: All information should be accompanied by as much identification as the writer cares to mention. In use, the information will become the property of the publication itself, although its use will be subject to any limitations and stipulations that its writers may demand in their communications. If names are not to be included or used and the need for anonymity is not self-evident, it should be mentioned as part of the letter; if limited use is possible, direction for that should be given. No submissions can be returned or acknowledged, although, of course, the paper will continue to use its own personal communication toward all secondary letters addressed to the editor on the subject.

NAACP & KKK

Continued from page 4

to ensure no meaningful leadership, and no viable economic or political program, would be available to the low income minority community. This is just more of the same. The black community gains no protection from a hostile government administration nor from the organizations of the extreme right who have declared their antagonisms. If the Klan is no real threat, as attorney Griffin seems to believe, no government protection is required. If it is

...alliance with the forces of the government provides no guarantee of safety.

dangerous, alliance with the forces of the government provides no guarantee of safety. We need to organize ourselves so the hate-mongers stay away and the government has no excuse to liquidate our rights under the guise of keeping our enemies at bay."

Mr. Love noted that with 7000 black elected politicians in the nation, conditions for poor black families are worse than ever. "We must work together to build benefits programs and independent, fighting community organization. We can't play their games; we get trapped every time as they play us off against each other — each according to their immediate self-interest," Mr. Love continued. He called for all concerned citizens to join together in the fight to make the legal institutions accountable to the people of our communities.

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Archives

COINTELPRO

Continued from page 7

Tackwood, you could get any kind of guns in the world. If you had the money, he'd get you one. This was the cover I was building. This is how I got back into it.

Then one day I was called up by Brown (Sgt. Larry Brown from SII) and Brown said, "Hey, Watkins wants to see you." I said, "Where?" "Well, he's up at the Academy now, he's not up at SII anymore." So I went to the academy and he said, "Hey, man, Intelligence (section of the LAPD) needs some people. They already got some people but they need some more people with your knowledge and your ability to infiltrate the Panthers." He said, "Why I nominate you is because you can report back to Brown what Intelligence knows because Intelligence won't give us any information."

Q: Just going back to late '68, early '69, around the second time, were you working with any informants within the Black Panther Party?

Tackwood: Early '69, no. You can say around February maybe I became aware of the Panther Party becoming infiltrated at a higher level.

Q: Do you know who was involved in the infiltration?

Tackwood: Melvin "Cotton" Smith was the agent...Another thing the LAPD was doing at that time — every time they arrested somebody with any type of Panther literature, even if it was a Panther paper, they would name them as Panthers. "We arrested four armed robbers robbing banks and found Panther literature." If we were to believe all the police must have been 5,000 Panthers in Los Angeles at one time, committing crimes. This was not White people — but the Blacks, against their own kind.

Q: Were you aware of an organized effort to do that?

Tackwood: Yeah, there was a nationally organized effort to do that. One of the three prerequisites was to harass. Number one, total harassment. To conquer or defeat any organization you must harass them, number one; defeat them financially, number two; and after all else fails, place defeat in their minds.

So, first of all there was constant harassment of the Panther Party, I mean the different branches. The second thing was to constantly arrest Panthers, creating situations where they have to be bailed out, and the third thing to kill the leaders off, to show, "Hey, man, if we can get the leaders, we can get the little man." The fear element. This was the constant and nationwide type for all the Black Panther Parties all over America. They were wiping them out one at a time. They were making more Panthers go underground. They were charging Panthers with everything under the sun.

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

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Citizens Decry

Continued from page 1

that was granted to the most prejudiced locale available, which had just produced an acquittal of constables in a similar case. This plea was granted, contrary to all established precedent in change of venue requests.

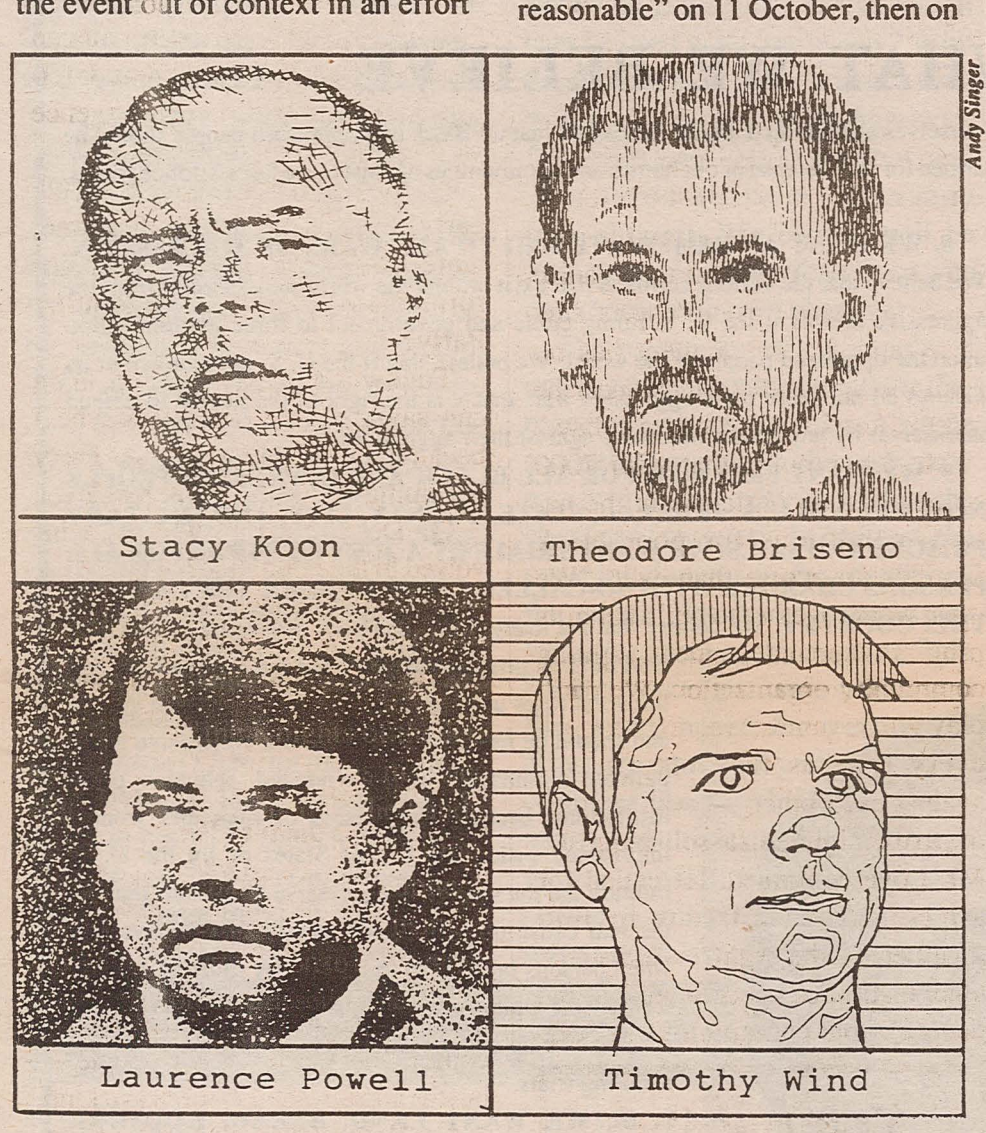
The jury in this changed venue had no black representation; the trial had no connection to the allegations of systemic racial policies by the L.A. police which motivated both front page headlines and popular demonstrations. Attorneys used to working for unpopular clients found their efforts to secure a just result blocked by a court system whose only concern seemed to be to take the event out of context in an effort to protect the system itself, while the defendants got the best legal talent available to The Policeman's Benevolent Association.

With acquittal came public displays of displeasure; with the charged atmosphere came official reaction and the inevitable violence that killed some five dozen civilians, wounded thousands and brought about mass arrests in the tens of thousands.

While the government and the press fanned the flames of discontent in L.A., a truck driver was beaten, an event also captured on videotape. Few who followed the events could fail to note the multiple potential life prison terms faced by all defendants. Nor could the more well-informed public be persuaded to ignore the government infiltration of the defense, or the separation of the Denny trial in time and space from the second King trial, which was elevated to sensational press attention to pacify a population moved to spontaneous mass action by the justice system's sanction of what most believed to be overt racism on the part of the LAPD; racism the courts would not allow to be addressed in the King matter, but which was tried in reverse in the Denny beating case.

Where the King defendants got their choice of judge and venue, it was the Denny prosecution who directed the identity of the judge in the Denny trial, made clear by the obligatory recusation (legal challenge of a judge's partiality or incompetency) that removed one judge seen by the prosecution as potentially sympathetic to the defense.

Presiding over the Denny trial, Judge John W. Ouderkirk played an aggressive role removing a black woman juror known only as "Juror 373" for "failing to deliberate as the law defines it," and being "unreasonable" on 11 October, then on 12 October removing another juror for personal reasons said to be unrelated to the case, and then refusing to remove Juror 104 for apparently similar reasons on 14 October.



The first removal came about as a result of a request from the jury forewoman who sent a note to the judge stating that eleven of the jurors had agreed that they could no longer work with the woman. No formal vote of the jurors was taken and the woman herself in a note to the judge the day following her dismissal stated that the other jurors had not read the instructions thoroughly and complained that conversations among the other jurors at the time they were supposed to be reading the instructions made it difficult to concentrate. Those who grew up watching *Twelve Angry Men* couldn't believe what was happening.

The juror's statement in the hearing before the judge was seemingly straightforward enough: "With

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Rap

Continued from page 5

done, albums containing profanity are now required to carry a warning that reads "Parental Warning: Explicit Lyrics." The warning logo has actually reached icon status. No one is ashamed to have this on their tapes or CDs, in fact, as harder music becomes more popular, most people kinda like it, and it's more likely that sales have increased rather than decreased, leading some to wonder at the true motives behind the scandal. The hate of censorship became trendy and well scened. People wear T-shirts with the warning logo on it, as well as T-shirts which show the arm of Uncle Sam "Censorship is XXXX."

Those who are not into loud music, profanity, hedonism or any kind of nationalism, rap concerts are, generally, notoriously boring. In order to reach the status of the "Successful" rap artist one must receive a bit interesting notoriety through press coverage of overcrowded and overguarded concerts that usually turn violent. The latest move on the concert scene is to combine rap concerts with alternative or hard-core concerts drawing different milieus to the crowded, intoxicated, often armed (despite the frisks, a woman can usually bring anything in), loud and hot pits. These concerts aren't held at stadiums or theaters, they are held in converted movie houses or theaters, where the entire first floor contains no seats, and the balcony is where you smoke your spliffs and drink your contraband 40-ounces. To get into the place, you have to stand in line outside, behind police barricades, as opposed to velvet ropes; and cops hang around on the other side, and come, en force, after the show lets out.

Rappers such as Ice T, have actually gone the hard-core route. Ice T, star of such movies as *The Riot Starting* and *New Jack City*, joined the Lalapalooza tour across the country, an all day concert held outside of cities consisting of the most popular hard-core, gothic, alternative and industrial groups in the country, with his hard-core band, Body Count. Body Count was a hit among the Lalapalooza crowds, although not so among the homeboys.

There has been a distance crossed over among the two milieus in inner city schools. White rap groups have started to emerge, such as the up and coming Sweet Lizard Iltet, with songs like "Merry-Go-Thrills" ("Merry-go-thrills/Do what you will/Everyone's got it right up until/It snaps the chord that keeps them chill," going on to say "Fascist political swine/Power to the government is your line/I could make you/ Or break you/but either way/I would hang you from the gallows any goddamn day"). The lead singer wears red and green dred locks and plays the electric violin.

They aren't the only rap group that calls directly for a revolution. Along with ghetto rap, mainstream rap has begun to take on that air. The very Top 40 rap group, Arrested Development, with male and female members, got into mainstream with their song, "Mr. Wendall," which speaks of learning from a homeless man: "Brothers pay all that money for college/and most of y'all still come out confused." Songs like "Raining Revolution" and "Give a Man a Fish" have not made it to the radio, despite the religious overlay which make them presentable in the first place. Their not-so-hard album has been picked up by everyone, from the alternatives to the homeboys to the YUPPY liberals who were into mellow revolutionist musicians like Tracey Chapman.

Styles have crossed over, alternative kids have donned baggy pants kept at butt level, in addition to the baseball caps. *The Village Voice* actually carried an ad for the traditionally underground silver flight jacket, calling it the "Hip Hop" jacket, and there isn't a trendy store that doesn't carry Doc Martin combat boots for over $100 (they used to go for $20 in stores only to be found by punks and skin heads).

The music industry has found rap very profitable. An entire society has taken its shape, focusing itself on the music. It's everywhere, and musicians, writers, fashion designers and every culture vulture that exists has taken up the quest for trendiness, big bucks or short-termed fame. Those of us who live in it are subject to the music industry, the writers and the fashion designers. It's kind of like going with the flow, but there's nothing smooth about it. For millions of Americans below the age of 25 or so, the music is a reference point, something we can call the source of our "culture." But the music industry, the DA, the sellers and the sell outs are laughing all the way to the bank, and the rest of us are left holding the spray paint.

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CCBPP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) is committed to the goals of the Black Panther Party (BPP) as outlined in its Ten Point Program which was written in 1966 by the Black Panther Party founders, Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.

The Ten Point Program outlined the goals and objectives toward changing conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression in all low-income and working communities of the U.S. and elsewhere, as the basis for unity and solidarity.

Also, the CCBPP is committed to the concept of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, introduced by Dr. Newton in 1970 at Boston College. Revolutionary Intercommunalism holds that there are basically two sides. On one side there is Reactionary Intercommunalism which presently holds the world's low income and working communities under conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression by controlling the wealth, resources and institutions, in order to maximize profits for the few. Huey identified this side as the leading reactionary side (that of the ruling class) which consists of a minority, fewer than five percent of the world population. Under these conditions, reactionary intercommunalism, by and large, keeps the poor and working communities on a cycle of degradation, under conditions of reaction, desperation and poverty, with no end in sight. Newton understood that in order to change these conditions and advance the economic and cultural interests of these oppressed communities of the world, disciplined organizations must be built from the bottom up, enabling these low-income and working communities to fight exploitation and oppression by any means necessary (this fight needs to start in the advanced industrialized U.S. because our nation leads the world in political reaction and economic exploitation).

CCBPP advances and upholds the goals which the BPP outlined in its Ten Point Program, and those goals are about ridding black ghettos and low-income and working communities of economic exploitation and political oppression, understanding that we can reach these goals only by seizing the time at the point of practice.

Black Panther Party 10-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

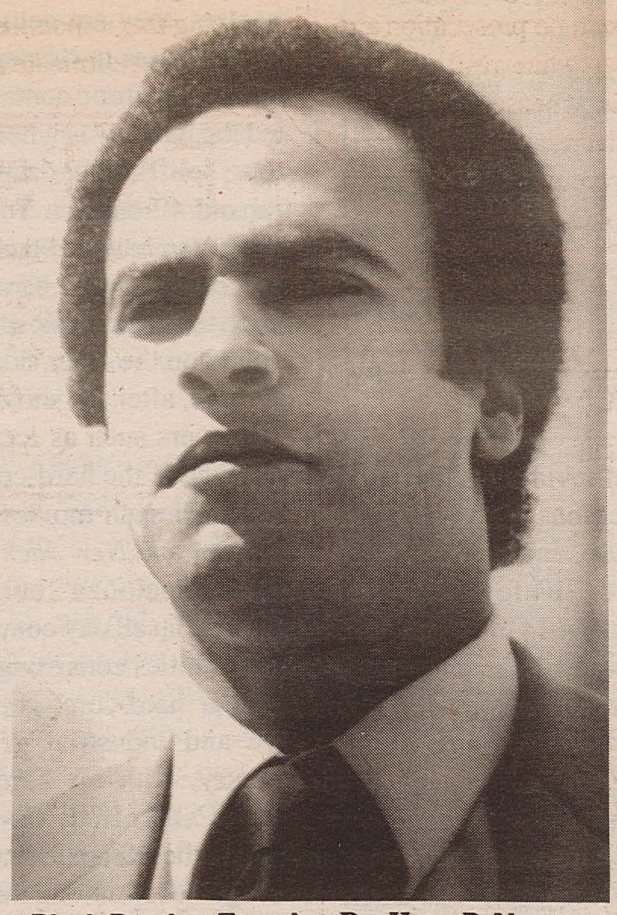
WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people on our communities with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self, If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illness, most of which have come about because of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it's our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. We believe that the various conflicts that exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires if the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. When, during human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands that have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; l that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evince a design to reduce them under absolute despotism. It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

The King case

The Sentencing

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

There is something particularly disheartening about the sentencing of the two LAPD brutes convicted of beating African-American motorist, Rodney King recently.

When U.S. District Court Judge Davies sentenced Officers Koon and Powell to two and a half years in prison he went to great pains to justify the bulk of the beating of King, citing King's oft-cited failure to "stand still" while enduring what no being should be asked to endure.

He decried, not the violence visited upon King, but the potential violence facing "police officers" in prison, proving Malcolm X's old maxim, that the system will make "the criminal look like the victim, and the victim look like the criminal.

How often do you read that judges sentence people to harsh terms "to send a message" that certain crimes are "unacceptable"?

The extremely lenient sentencing of the two LAPD brutes also "sends a message" — it tells the world, as did Judge Davies in his remarks at sentencing, that the vicious, brutal, unprovoked bone-breaking beating of King was utterly "acceptable," and perfectly legal, as long as King tried to dare protect himself from the deadly, ravenous onslaught of uniformed savages.

Only when someone is a police officer is he not a "criminal" in the eyes of the so-called "law."

Only when someone is a victim of police savagery are they no longer "victims," but "criminals."

The extremely lenient sentencing of Koon and Powell, to two and a half years, constituted, via judicial remarks, the second assault of Rodney King by the state, which used the weapon of words rather than that of blackjacks. Rarely has the judicial fabric of supposed impartiality worn so thin as in this reluctant sentencing of Koon and Powell.

Many in South Central and Chicano L.A. took the news of the sentencing with grim resignation, quiet acknowledgment that the system is *their* system — not the people's. Both ex-LAPD storm troopers will wait a full two months before seeing the inside of a prison cell, and both will no doubt be shipped to "Club Fed," the sweetest, softest, least repressive joints in America, where they can work on their tans and their tennis games.Such plush conditions flow from the judicial concern that "police officers" face "dangers" in prisons — as if "criminals" (which they are not, in the judge's opinion) do not!

There is grim certainty that had not Brown, Black and Yellow L.A. not erupted in flaming outrage, there would have been no prosecution after the Simi Valley whitewash.

So, let this "message" be sent: Without popular resistance to the racist, police state, there will be not even the slightest semblance of "justice."

Citizens Decry

Continued from page 13

everyone talking, I mean, you know, we're in the jury room when you are trying to read it and understand it, at a time when everyone is talking at the same time, it just isn't easy to concentrate. I can't stay back there and fight with them because it's too hard on me, it really is and I just can't in good conscience see it go like this, I mean, I really cannot. *They are not getting a fair trial, I'm telling you right here, they are not.*"

When she was replaced by an alternate, an Asian woman, the jury was required to reach any preliminary consensus previously arrived at again; the decisions were reached by the jury within hours on various of the counts.

Legal experts and, perhaps, more than anything the people themselves, see a strong element of illegal manipulation of the trial to find 12 jurors who, in the words of the jury foreman, would understand what the objective of the trial is and not obstruct it.

Few L.A. blacks have forgotten the Denny defendants were among those protesting the King acquittals at a time the community was besieged by thousands of police, national guardsman, and U.S. troops who opened fire on local citizens.

In the federal King trial, after all, the judge had reversed himself in applying the pronouncements of U.S. v. Classic to eliminate any consideration of racial animus, which would have opened consideration of the entire policy of the LAPD, or left the prosecution on the losing end of the police officer's testimony. In the first King case, the perceived hostility of the citizenry had been allowed to justify the police beating by furnishing the groundwork for suspicion of drug use and resistance. But in the Denny case, the perception of the King verdicts as a statement that anti-black violence would be accepted, as well as the conditions of martial law and curfew imposed upon the minority community, was not permitted to furnish any legal justification.

Despite the manipulated court results and the sensationalized and selective press reportage that sought to lay the blame for the problems of an entire community on one individual or another, a growing feeling is emanating from the nation's population — that the real causes of violence in, and the lack of recourse for, the low income community have not even surfaced in either courtroom location. Many believe another forum is needed.

Commemorator Editor Melvin Dickson has called on the general public to attend a series of classes about the contrasting legal theories and reasons surrounding both the King and Denny trials. These presentations will discuss both implied and implicit racism as a factor in both cases. All interested groups and individuals should call Mr. Dickson at (510) 652-8828.

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